

M. Dechevrens has carried out suggestive researches in terrestrial magnetism and atmospheric electricity, and has written much on these subjects, on typhoons in the China Seas, on the hydrodynamic theory of cyclones, and on the zodiacal light.

#### UNIFICATION OF THE FRENCH METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES.

[Reprinted from the *Meteorological Magazine*, London, February, 1921, p. 18.]

In the September issue of the *Meteorological Magazine* we were able to announce that the consolidation of the Meteorological Service of this country had been completed by the incorporation of the Admiralty Meteorological Service in the Meteorological Office.<sup>1</sup> It is now officially announced that the three meteorological organizations in France are being amalgamated in like fashion. By a decree dated November 25, 1920, a National Meteorological Service, attached to the Ministry of Public Works (Under Secretariat for Aeronautics and Aerial Transport), is created by the unification of—

(a) The Central Meteorological Office (hitherto under the Ministry of Public Instruction);

(b) The Central Meteorological Service of the Ministry of War; and

(c) The Meteorological Service of the Service de la Navigation Aérienne.

The National Meteorological Office will deal with all meteorological questions, and will comprise a scientific section and a technical section as well as other sections in touch with the special requirements of the Ministries concerned. An Advisory Committee, including representatives from the Academy of Science and from various Ministries, is being constituted. Col. Delcambre is appointed Director of the National Meteorological Service as from January 1, 1921.

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#### THE SCOTTISH METEOROLOGICAL SOCIETY.

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At meetings held in Edinburgh on December 17, 1920, and in London on January 19, 1921, appropriate action was taken to bring about the incorporation of the Scottish Meteorological Society with the Royal Meteorological Society. The Scottish Meteorological Society after a career of 65 years thus ceases to exist as a separate entity.

As may be learned from a paper by Mr. A. Watt in the journal (Vol. XV, No. 28), the foundation of the society in 1855 was due mainly to the exertions of Sir John Stuart Forbes, of Pitsligo and Fettercairn, Bart., and Mr. David Milne Home, of Wedderburn and Milne Graden. The period was one of special significance. The British (now the Royal) Meteorological Society had been founded five years before as a successor to the Meteorological Society of London (1823-1840). The meteorological department of the board of trade—the forerunner of the present meteorological office—was in process of organization. The work of Dove on the distribution of temperature over the globe had stimulated interest in the science, while Leverrier had just organized a daily weather report in France. As regards Scotland itself, the considerable amount of observational work

which had been done by enthusiastic amateurs required coordination.

The society had its birth at a meeting held on July 11, 1855, in the rooms of the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland, presided over by the eighth Marquis of Tweeddale. The Duke of Argyll, F. R. S., was elected president, and an influential provisional council was formed. \* \* \*

The activities of the society have been numerous. For some years after its foundation Dr. Stark was secretary, and he virtually created a network of about 50 observing stations. An ozone committee was extremely active for a long period. In 1883 the society erected an observatory on the summit of Ben Nevis for the study of mountain conditions, and in 1890 opened a sea-level station at Fort William to work in conjunction with it. The observatories remained in operation till 1904, and their supervision absorbed much of the energies of the society, but in that year financial difficulties led to their closing. A most valuable series of observations, extending over 20 years, had, however, been obtained, and their discussion by Buchan, Omond, and other authors in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh* is of permanent value.

Throughout its existence the society has regularly published its journal, in which the observations of Scottish observatories and lighthouses have been coordinated and many important papers on Scottish and general meteorological subjects have appeared.

No review, however brief, of the work of the society could be written without mention of the work of Dr. Alexander Buchan, who was appointed secretary in December, 1860. He had previously been a schoolmaster at Dunblane and had made his mark as a botanist. Dr. Buchan became one of the most eminent of meteorologists; his work on "The Mean Pressure of the Atmosphere and the Prevailing Winds of the Globe" has been described by Prof. Hann as epoch making and as constituting a starting point for the newer meteorology. On the return of the *Challenger* expedition the meteorological data were placed in Dr. Buchan's hands for discussion. In 1889 he published an elaborate report on "Atmospheric Circulation," based on these observations and on meteorological statistics from all parts of the world. In addition to other works, a large number of papers were published by him in the journal, and with the cooperation of Dr. A. J. Herbertson he prepared the *Atlas of Meteorology*, which was published by the enterprise of Dr. J. G. Bartholomew. Dr. Buchan retained the secretaryship until his death in 1907, when he was succeeded by Mr. Andrew Watt, who had been his personal assistant for seven years and who has ably carried on the traditions of the society.

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In recent years the association between the Society and the Meteorological Office has been very close, and the Edinburgh branch office was located in the society's rooms until a few months ago, when the office took over the responsibility for all the statistical work which had been organized by the society. Fortunately, Mr. Watt, with his 20 years' experience of Scottish meteorology, has been able to accept an appointment on the staff of the Edinburgh office.

The concentration of effort which will result from the incorporation of the Scottish in the Royal Meteorological Society should be of benefit to the study of meteorology throughout the Empire.

<sup>1</sup> See *Mo. WEATHER REV.*, Nov., 1920, p. 659.